



Security Council

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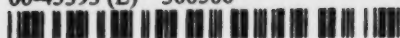
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Letter dated 30 May 2000 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Ethiopia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith a statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, issued on 30 May 2000 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Fesseha A. Tessema
Chargé d'affaires a.i.



**Annex to the letter dated 30 May 2000 from the Chargé d'affaires
a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Ethiopia to the United Nations
addressed to the President of the Security Council**

Statement

The Ethiopian Defence Forces that had advanced deep into western Eritrea since 12 May 2000 have evacuated the area after having successfully completed their mission.

The mission had two objectives:

1. To destroy enemy forces that were in retreat in the area;
2. To facilitate the realization of the return of Ethiopian territories along other parts of the border that had been earlier invaded by Eritrea.

The loss suffered by Eritrea at the western front contributed to the success of Ethiopia's campaign to evict Eritrean troops of occupation in other areas along the common border.

The defeat of Eritrean troops in the western front also encouraged the leaders in Asmara to return to the peace talks without the preconditions they so arrogantly put forward a month ago.

At the same time, it should be noted that, while Eritrea's leaders declare that they have accepted a ceasefire, what is evident is that, realism aside, feverish efforts are under way on all the fronts to regroup the battered Eritrean army for the purpose of making a comeback. Any effort by the Eritrean regime to instigate another round of combat will be resolutely rebuffed. Eritrea cannot be allowed to gamble with the peace and stability that is so essential for any progress to be made in furthering development in the Horn of Africa.

Ethiopia has no territorial claims over Eritrea. The withdrawal of the Ethiopian defence forces from western Eritrea is proof of that. All that Ethiopia wanted was the removal of Eritrean troops from Ethiopian soil. As in the other areas of the western and central fronts, Eritrean troops have now fled Bure in the east. It has, however, not been verified that they have vacated Badda on the north-east frontier. Ethiopia is taking urgent measures to verify if indeed Eritrean troops have withdrawn from all occupied territories in the region.

Ethiopia, however, has at no time closed the door to peace. It remains committed to the OAU Chairman's efforts to reach a just solution to the crisis, and a delegation led by the Minister for Foreign Affairs is in Algiers for the OAU-sponsored talks.

30 May 2000
Ministry of Foreign Affairs